

p-Raymont, Henry
p-Salinger, Pierre
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to my Government

Salinger Says Interloper Sat In At a Top Secret Meeting in '61

Breach in Security Resulted
in 'Pandemonium' at White
House, Ex-Aide Recalls

By HENRY RAYMONT
Special to The New York Times

BOSTON, June 2—A Seattle businessman inadvertently crashed a top secret White House meeting at the height of the Berlin crisis of 1961, Pierre Salinger, who was President Kennedy's press secretary said today.

Mr. Salinger described the incident as the worst security breach in his four years at the White House. He said it jeopardized highly sensitive National Security Council plans for the defense of Western access to Berlin at a time when Soviet air power threatened a confrontation.

The visitor went unnoticed, and toward the end of the meeting President Kennedy went up to him, patted his knee and wistfully confided, "Things look pretty tough today," Mr. Salinger reported.

"It caused pandemonium in the security establishment," he said at a news conference held here in connection with the annual convention of the American Booksellers Association at the Sheraton-Boston Hotel.

Novel Describes Incident

The incident is described in Mr. Salinger's forthcoming first novel, "On Instructions of My Government." The names of the participants have been changed, and the crisis in question deals with Chinese missiles in a fictional Latin-American country, Santa Clara, in 1976. The book will be published next week by Doubleday & Company.

In an interview, the author later identified the businessman as Elroy McCaw, a wealthy Seattle television executive, who is a former owner of WINS in New York.

Mr. McCaw, who died last year, told Mr. Salinger about



The book's jacket design

the incident in the presence of a mutual friend, Gordon McClendon of Dallas, who also owns a group of television stations.

Mr. Salinger said Mr. McCaw had intruded after a series of misunderstandings that began when he flew to Washington to attend a meeting at the Pentagon of the National Security Advisory Council, a volunteer citizens group, of which he was a member.

The meeting had been canceled because all top military chiefs had been called to the emergency session at the White House.

"When he called Gen. Curtis LeMay's office saying he was expected at a 'National Security Council' meeting, the general's secretary called the White House and somehow got clearance from Mrs. Evelyn Lincoln, the President's secretary," Mr. Salinger said.

"At the White House, McCaw was met by Gen. Ted Clifton, the President's military aide, and escorted to the meeting, which was already in progress. The room was dark as the military were showing the President slides of Soviet overflights and troop concentrations. It was only afterwards that his presence was detected and then all hell broke loose," he said.